

recollections of feelings and joyous ecstasies of fireside scenes in early life. Have years come over us and are we busy amid the cares of life! Has time swept away the hearthstone of our early home and laid in the sepulcher those dear ones who reared us in our infancy and matured us to meet the sterner duties of life? Does neither parent nor homes remain to remind us of the scenes in which we once reveled with delight? Yet the heart garners up what time cannot efface and brings sweet reminiscences which the vicissitudes of life cannot erase from the mind. A happy Christian home in early life has the most permanent influence in the formation of individual character; the tender sympathies and affectionate solicitude of devoted parents or the confiding love or filial attachment of sisters mould and soften into pliancy all the finer sensibilities of the heart and fit men to be companionable that shall afterwards cling to him in similar relations of life; the confident trust and warm attachment of every beloved companion of the fireside soften and mould into form all generous impulses of the youthful heart causing the sister's affection and the brother's sterner nature to the general happiness of the entire circle. These endearing relations render home one of the most powerful and effectual means of determining character that God has given to man. Other relations are modified by circumstances but around the fireside of home where mind comes in contact with mind and the first beatings of the heart can be taught to pulsate for truth and for heaven. The true home exists only by being branches of the true vine Christ Jesus, for severed from the vine the branches become withered and die. The home should constantly feed from the vine, the church, that it may abide in Christ and he may abide in the home, "for without me ye can do nothing." The church and home should be bound together with loving ties of sympathy for each other. We should live in the church as well as in the home. Our lives should be so devoted to the church that we would ever be striving to make it a success and to lift up a fallen brother or sister, for there are so many things to make us stumble and fall by the way, and if some one will speak a kind word or give us encouragement in some way, it will be a means of lifting us up to a higher plane. When we have Christ in the home and in our hearts, then can we render loving service, for he has said his yoke is easy and his burden is light and the nearer we live to him the easier it becomes for us to work for him. When we are not in sympathy with the church the work becomes a burden, but when we love Christ with our whole heart it becomes a pleasure to render service to him and to the church. Then will we say, "here am I Lord, use me as thou wilt." Some of us may think because we are not as well educated as some one else we can do nothing. We may think we have no talent but we each have a talent if we will but use it when we have need. He has said, "Whatsoever ye

shall ask in my name ye shall receive." There is a work for each one to do be it great or small. Moody has said the shortest road to education and refinement is the road that leads to Christ. His aim was to learn to know Christ and him crucified, and this he did learn and teach and great was the reward. We may not be as successful as he but we may be instrumental in a great many ways to win souls into the fold or into the church. And the greatest influence is our home life, for our life is the world's bible and am sorry to say the only one many read and study so let us be careful who have named the name of Christ that we be not stumbling blocks in the way of sinners. Let us walk about Zion and go round about her, tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generations following, for this God is our God forever and ever. He will be our guide even unto death.

The Gift of Christ—Eternal Life

God's great gift to us was his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, "in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily." One with the Father, in nature as in purpose of grace, Jesus the well beloved seconded the Father's good pleasure in the love he bore us, and "gave himself for" us, and with the gift of himself, all that he was and had of grace and power. The New Testament ratified in the blood of the covenant has bestowed upon all true believers many priceless gifts from his loving heart and hand. Chief and first among them is the gift of eternal life.

"In him was life; and the life was the light of men." It was the prime purpose of God that we who had not life, should have it from him as his gift. Therefore he "gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life." So, also, does the apostle in his Epistle to the Romans tell us: "The gift of God is eternal life thru Jesus Christ." Surely this is a most precious and unspeakable gift, sent to us sinners from heaven and brought to us by such a bearer as the only begotten Son of God, in whom all the treasures of wisdom and grace dwell in fullness.

It is not uncommon for men to repair to their deposit vaults and taking out therefrom their treasure boxes look over their possessions from mere delight in the contemplation. We would have our readers look over the great treasure which we have in Christ Jesus our Lord, and delight themselves in the gifts which God has given us in him—the chief of them all being the one we have under consideration in this article.

When Jesus came, he said to his disciples: "I am come that ye might have life and have it more abundantly." And again, he said: "My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall any man pluck them out of my

hand." It would follow from this that tho we may have had, before we came to know him who is the life of men, natural life, which is after all but intelligent existence, we did not possess that "eternal life," which he came to bestow. That life is the "gift of God," and not an inheritance from nature descending to us from our father Adam down thru all the generations which have proceeded from him. The chief characteristic of this eternal life is not that of continuity, tho that is true of it. It is the very life of God in the soul. It is the communication to us of the very nature of God. Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, by a kind of new incarnation, is born again in us. It is often spoken of as the new man. Paul says: "Therefore, if any man be in Christ Jesus there is a new creation." It is the same, indeed, as that which our Saviour spoke to Nicodemus concerning saying: "Except a man be born from above he cannot see the kingdom of God." It is as much the fruit of the Holy Ghost, overshadowing us as was the human nature of Jesus the fruit of the Holy Ghost, who overshadowed the Virgin at the time of his miraculous conception. When we consider what a great thing this is which is given to us, and done for us, we are overwhelmed with a sense of the dignity and glory which God has by his grace thru Jesus Christ conferred upon us. We do not wonder at the ecstatic exclamation of the sainted apostle John, in his old age, when he wrote: "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us that we should be called the sons of God and be so." Not that he compares us in this respect to Jesus Christ himself saying: "therefore the world knoweth us not because it knew him not."

This gift of eternal life, in fact, unites us to God not only for salvation but regeneration in a mystical and real union with Jesus Christ who is the "express image of his Father's person and the very brightness of his glory," constitutes us together with Jesus Christ substantially a new race of men in the world of which he is the head. While we have not altogether ceased to be the children of Adam according to the flesh, we have certainly become the children of God according to the Spirit. Moreover the time comes when we shall have done entirely with our Adamic inheritance and become completely identified with our Jesus in nature and inheritance. "The first man was of the earth, earthy; but the second man was the Lord from heaven." This being the affirmation of the apostle concerning Jesus Christ, it is also affirmed of us who have become partakers with and from him of the gift of eternal life. What honor is here for even the lowliest and poorest of the household of faith! It is in view of this great dignity that the apostle of love says: "Therefore every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure;" and another makes it the chief business of the child of God on earth to "show forth the virtues of him that hath called us out of darkness